

# TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROJECT SUMMARY

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<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>BETTER WORK LESOTHO</b>
<b>REGION/COUNTRY</b>	AFRICA/Lesotho
<b>PROJECT DURATION</b>	September 30, 2009 – July 1, 2016
<b>FUNDING LEVEL</b>	USD 3,910,000
<b>PROBLEM TO BE ADDRESSED</b>	<p>Harsh working conditions in garment factories have been at the center of a large and growing debate about globalization and labor standards for years. Low wages, long hours, high temperatures, excessive noise, poor air quality, unsanitary conditions, and abuse (both verbal and physical) are often cited as evidence of non-compliant labor practices which characterize production in developing countries such as Lesotho.</p> <p><b><u>National Context</u></b></p> <p>Lesotho is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranked 138 out of 177 countries on the Human Development Index. The apparel industry, which has been built on the preferential trade opportunities created by the US African Growth &amp; Opportunity Act (AGOA), is the largest employer in Lesotho, as it accounts for nearly 50 percent of the formally employed workforce. Eighty to 85% of jobs in the garment sector are held by women. Lesotho's export to the US market, and is now exporting increasingly higher volumes to the European Union and South Africa. Lesotho is known as the "jeans capital of the Africa", producing 26 million pairs of denim jeans a year.</p>
<b>PROJECT OBJECTIVES</b>	<p>To support decent work in the apparel sector by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• monitoring compliance with national labor law and international labor standards;</li><li>• strengthening government's ability to conduct labor inspections; and</li><li>• increasing the capacity of worker and employer representatives to engage in social dialogue.</li></ul>
<b>PROJECT STRATEGY</b>	Better Work combines labor monitoring and training to apparel factories around the world. The strategy

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focuses on market incentives for both producers and buyers, as labor law compliance increases competitiveness and international firms are driven by the need to protect their reputation and image. By monitoring garment factories' compliance with international labor standards, Better Work informs major brands and buyers of labor conditions in the sector. The program also educates workers and managers on labor rights and responsibilities, and provides a space for factory level social dialogue, through the Performance Improvement Consultative Committees (PICCs), which include managers and workers.

## PROJECT IMPACT/RESULTS

- ✓ Better Work is active in 16 apparel factories in Lesotho, benefiting 25,000 workers, 85% of whom are women.
- ✓ It is estimated that the HIV infection rate in the garment sector exceeds 40%. Better Work has contributed to the elimination of formalized HIV/AIDS discrimination in factories in Lesotho

## GRANTEE

International Labor Organization (ILO)

## IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

International Finance Corporation (IFC)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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**Last update, December 2015**